

Foxy Lady Wins Giraglia Rolex Cup



Dominique Heyraud, Owner of FOXY LADY and co-skipper Michel Heyraud, overall winners, receive a Rolex timepiece

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Giraglia Rolex Cup

St Tropez, France - Genoa, Italy

The surprise overall winner of the 59th Giraglia Rolex Cup is the 37ft-Foxy Lady (FRA), co-skippered by brothers Dominique and Michel Heyraud. Foxy Lady finished the race in a time of 48 hours and four minutes, at 12:08 CEST on 24 June, and went on to win on corrected time by 11 minutes, 30 seconds ahead of a fellow 37-footer Jeminy (FRA) with Calima (ESP), overall winners in 2009, finishing in third place.

Dominique Heyraud was surprised and elated in equal measure: *"It's absolutely a great feeling because we did not expect it at all. It is a very prestigious race that counts a lot in the Mediterranean. We had the feeling that we managed the race quite well, that we sailed properly, and also that we were lucky in some situations regarding our decisions. It was a very interesting and challenging race."*

"The funny part about it, is that each night 'the cards are mixed'," continues Heyraud, "in the evening you see boats around and in the morning at sunrise there are different ones there and you wonder if you have gained or lost in the race, if you have chosen the best option. We thought we could be well placed in IRC but we never thought we could win on handicap."

Heyraud reveals the moment when he realised that the dream may become reality: *"I was going for bread in the kitchen downstairs and then my colleague showed me on the screen of his mobile the list of the results, saying: there is something I would like to show you. I asked him, what's this all about, and when he enlarged the list saw: '1st Foxy Lady'. It really took me a while to realise that it was really the results of the Giraglia Rolex Cup and not from another local race in the Mediterranean we had done before."*

Brother Michel was equally ecstatic: *"I would like to thank Rolex for having "re-energised" great and mythical offshore races like the Giraglia, the Fastnet, the Sydney Hobart. Sailing is such a wonderful sport and it is great to have such support. To win the Giraglia Rolex Cup of course means a lot for us. It is not exactly the same as winning the 24h of Le Mans but quite similar, since it is the biggest race in the Mediterranean."*

And, why the evocative name *Foxy Lady*, for this twenty year old yacht? *"It was the name it had when we bought it,"* continues Dominique, *"we kept it because we thought it fits very well. It was also a play on words because very often the X-Yachts have a name with an X and so it has a double meaning because it is also a song by Jimi Hendrix. We like very much the stern of this boat and we said to each other: "this boat is a sexy lady and we keep the name because we like her"*.

As winner of the Rolex Challenge Trophy, *Foxy Lady* collected her Rolex Submariner Rolesor as IRC Overall Winner on corrected time during a ceremony at the Yacht Club Italiano in Genoa.

Other awards were presented to Pietro Supparo's *Gianin 6* (ITA), the self-proclaimed 'slowest yacht of the fleet', as winners of Class ORC on corrected time. Canard 41 *Aurora* (ITA) picked up the Marco Paleari Challenge Trophy based on a combined score across all of the races that took place during the week.

Flying Under One Flag

Esimit Europa 2 (SLO) were always the strong favourite for the line honours title and whilst the metrological conditions thwarted the crew's ambition of breaking the course record of 18 hours, 3 minutes and 15 seconds, the 28-man crew were delighted with their performance at the Giraglia Rolex Cup.

As an Olympic gold medallist and America's Cup winner, skipper Jochen Schümann has seen it all in the world of sailing. Post-race, he provided an expert analysis of the 243-nautical mile challenge: *"The beginning was the most exciting for the crew, as we started behind the other classes and it was like sailing an obstacle race through the small boats. From then on we were in the lead and in good control and fulfilled our strategic plan, up until the first night when the wind died. It then became a gamble where the next breeze would be. Things changed in front of the Giraglia rock, as a building breeze from south arrived. We managed to sail past the rock with almost no wind but just around Giraglia we got a good southerly for a perfect finish into Genoa."*

"We are very happy to have claimed line honours," closes Schümann, "There was some great teamwork, we did a good job in keeping moving, needing some zig-zags in the night to find breeze."

Tactician Sidney Gavignet added: *"It's a great pleasure to work with this European team, with all the different languages and cultures. Communication is very important and the navigation and tactics went very well. It was important to be patient and a pleasure to cross the line ahead of so many boats."*

Owner Igor Simcic is proud of the crew's development: *"Without such a great team it would not have been possible to succeed. The team represents Europe, with crew members from different countries. Seeing this great job is our message: all Europeans, together on the same boat, winning."* Simcic highlighted the role of navigator Juan Vila, another key addition to the afterguard: *"It was very interesting to work with him, understand his thought process and how he gets access to the right information."*

Tales From The Chasing Pack

Alegre (GBR) were the second boat to finish, capping an impressive Giraglia Rolex Cup after they won their class in the inshore races. *"We stuck to our plan and went round the rock probably with the most breeze of the whole race,"* explains owner/skipper Andres Soriano, *"and indeed in the three times I have done the race. We had a good run into the Genoa harbour, which is usually the slowest part of the race."*

The Japanese crew of the 39-ft *Donna J* have considerably less Giraglia Rolex Cup experience than Soriano's *Alegre*, and in recording a time of 46 hours, 50 minutes and 53 seconds, thoroughly enjoyed participating. *"It is our first time here,"* explains skipper Kawakami Seiji, *"and we found it all so exciting, particularly rounding the Giraglia rock. We will definitely try and come back next year."*

Yan Trouven of Ker 53 Cruiser-Racer *Dralion* (MLT) reflected on his team's time of 43 hours, 32 minutes and 46 seconds: *"It was quite a long race with not too much wind and during certain stages on the GPS we were going backwards."*

Unlike many other crews, *Dralion*, though, enjoyed a relatively comfortable rounding of the Giraglia rock. *"We had some good wind during the turn so we came out of it well whereas other boats were parked next to it,"* added Trouven, closing with his mantra for the race, *"the two important things were keeping the boat going and the maintaining the crew's concentration."*

The overall winner two years ago, the S&S 43 *Calima* (ESP), finished in third place in 2011, although owner Javier Pujol has his regrets this time around: *"It was a very nice race, but technically we made a tactical mistake between La Fourmigue and the Giraglia. We were very well positioned until this point but with this error, rounded the rock with no advantage. It is a shame because on paper the conditions were better than in 2009."* Given *Calima*'s impressive overall standing, that tactical decision may have proven costly.

Giuseppe Tadini's Dufour-34 *Bachiottinho* (ITA) has not had as far to travel as the aforementioned yachts and for the young crew, the race had its ups and downs as tactician Stefano Rusconi reveals: *"We raced well up to the Giraglia and had a good position in the handicap standings. The second part of the race was more difficult though as the wind*

changed and forced us to lose a lot of time. However, we're happy as for us it is a week's holiday in June and being in Saint-Tropez was amazing."

Whilst many of the crews will now be thinking of rest and recuperation, for others such as *Alegre* (GBR), *Lucky* (USA) *Near Miss* (SUI) and *Pace* (GBR) preparations are beginning for the Rolex Fastnet Race, taking place between 14-20 August.

2011 Giraglia Rolex Cup Winners

Class IRC: Foxy Lady (FRA), Dominique Heyraud

Class ORC: Gianin 6 (ITA), Pietro Supparo

Line Honours: Esimit Europa 2 (SLO), Igor Simcic

Marco Paleari Challenge Trophy: Aurora (ITA), Paolo Bonomo/Roberto Bruno

Further information on the Giraglia Rolex Cup may be found at www.giragliarolexcup.com .

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A video round-up of the news and action from each day of the offshore race will be available each evening on www.regattanews.com/event_giraglia_videos.asp?eventid=265